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INSIDE WASHINGTON

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SECRETARY of State George Shultz and U.S. Arms Control Director Kenneth Adelman are facing another blood battle with conservatives in the administration and Congress over a plan to appoint the wife of Nicaragua's World Court lawyer to a sensitive job in the arms control field.

Insiders say that Antonia Chayes is about to be hired as a consultant to the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's Office of Verification.

Mrs. Chayes' husband, Abram, represented Nicaragua before the World Court last year in its campaign to stop CIA-backed rebels from sailing its harbors.

The job, in an office that monitors Soviet compliance with arms control treaties, will give Mrs. Chayes access to some of the most closely guarded secrets of the CIA, the Pentagon and the National Security Agency.

Mrs. Chayes was a political appointee in the Carter administration when she served as assistant secretary of the Air Force — a fact that has not gone unnoticed.

"It would be absolutely ridiculous to have someone in a position that allows her access to some of the most sensitive information in the government and then go home every night to Nicaragua's lawyer," fumed one conservative.

Officials say that if the Chayes appointment goes through, "it will be the last straw as far as Mr. Adelman is concerned."

And there certainly would be a movement by conservative senators like Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and possibly Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.) to unseat Adelman and declare open legislative warfare on Shultz.

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